

less, there is both theoretical and practical evidence, which observation confirms, that such is the case.

THE PURPOSE AND SOURCE OF FOODS

Need not be dwelt upon here. Foods must contain the elements of which the bodily tissues are formed, for the growth and repair of the tissues, and substances which may be readily oxidised or burned, for supplying heat and force to the body; and they must be of such a nature as to be capable of solution or "digestion" in the alimentary canal. All organic matter has its primary source in the vegetable kingdom, and all foods are derived in the first instance from this kingdom. Vegetable products contain, with tissue forming substances, a store of force, accumulated from the vast supply continually emitted from the rays of the sun—potential energy, which the human organism, like other animal organisms, converts into various forms of actual energy, and these products are used by man as foods in great variety.

ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE FOODS.

It is, and with a portion of mankind probably always will be, an unsettled question whether animal or vegetable food is best adapted to the necessities of the human organization. While some nations, as in the torrid zone, subsist almost wholly or perhaps quite, upon food selected from the vegetable kingdom, other nations, in the frigid zone, feed solely upon animals, in temperate climates, amongst civilized nations, a diet consisting of a mixture of both animal and vegetable foods is almost universal. This is doubtless as it should be. If ever there is to be a change, it seems more probable that in future ages mankind, as the race reaches greater perfection, will subsist even still more than at present upon animal food.

Animal food being identical with the structures to be built up and maintained in the human body, contains neither more nor less than what is required for growth and renovation. In vegetable foods, on the other hand, we encounter starch, gum, lignine and cellulose, which have no existence in the animal body. These are as a rule more indigestible substances, and, indeed, the two latter are quite insusceptible of digestion by the human digestive powers, and simply traverse unchanged the alimentary canal. In the digestion of vegetable food, then, on the whole, a more complex process has to be gone through than in the digestion of animal food. Animal food may be regarded as vegetable food which has been once digested.